

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for reducing a chromium-containing material, comprising a mixing step of mixing a chromium-containing material comprising chromium oxide and iron oxide and a carbonaceous reductant to provide a mixture; and a reducing step of heating, and reducing the mixture with a rapid temperature rise by radiation heating in a moving hearth furnace to provide a reduced mixture, wherein the average rate of raising the temperature of the mixture in the reducing step is ~~13.6°C/s~~ 13.96°C/s or higher in the period from the initiation of the radiation heating of the mixture until the mixture reaches 1,114°C.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The method for reducing a chromium-containing material according to Claim 1, wherein the reducing step is performed at 1,250°C to 1,400°C.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The method for reducing a chromium-containing material according to Claim 1, further comprising a reducing and melting step of melting the reduced mixture provided in the reducing step by successive radiation heating to provide a reduced molten material.

Claim 5 (Original): The method for reducing a chromium-containing material according to Claim 4, further comprising a solidifying step of cooling and solidifying the reduced molten material provided in the reducing and melting step in the moving hearth

furnace to provide a reduced solid; and a separating step of separating the reduced solid into metal and slag.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The method for reducing a chromium-containing material according to Claim 4, wherein the reducing step is performed at 1,250°C to 1,400°C; and the reducing and melting step is performed at a temperature higher than that in the reducing step within the range of 1,350°C to 1,700°C.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The method for reducing a chromium-containing material according to Claim 1, wherein a carbonaceous atmosphere-adjusting agent is charged together with the mixture onto the hearth of the moving hearth furnace in the reducing step.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The method for reducing a chromium-containing material according to Claim 1, wherein the reducing step is performed at 1,300°C to 1,400°C.

Claims 9-11 (Canceled).